

DECLARATION

Against the FRENCH KING.

WILLIAM R.



T having pleased Almighty God to make Us the happy Instruments of Rescuing these Nations from Great and Imminent Dangers, and to place Us upon the Throne of these Kingdoms, We think Our Selves obliged to endeavour to the uttermost to Promote the Welfare of Our People, which can never be effectually secured, but by preventing the Miseries that threaten them from Abroad.

When we consider the many unjust Methods the *French* King hath of late Years taken to gratifie his Ambition, that he has not only Invaded the Territories of the Emperor, and of the Empire now in Amity with Us, laying Waste whole Countries, and destroying the Inhabitants by his Armies, but Declared War against Our Allies without any Provocation, in manifest Violation of the Treaties Confirmed by the Guaranty of the Crown of *England*; We can do no less then Joyn with Our Allies in opposing the Designs of the *French* King, as the Disturber of the Peace, and the Common Enemy of the Christian World.

And besides the Obligations We lie under by Treaties with Our Allies, which are a sufficient Justification of Us for taking up Arms at this time, since they have called upon Us so to do, the many Injuries done to Us and to Our Subjects, without any Reparation, by the *French* King, are such, that (however of late Years they were not taken Notice of, for Reasons well known to the World, nevertheless) We will not pass them over without a Publick and Just Resentment of such Outrages.

It is not long since the *French* took Licences from the *English* Governor of *New-found-Land*, to Fish in the Seas upon that Coast, and paid a Tribute for such Licences, as an Acknowledgment of the sole Right of the Crown of *England* to that Island; and yet of late, the Encroachments of the *French* upon Our said Island, and Our Subjects Trade and Fishery, have been more like the Invasions of an Enemy, then becoming Friends, who enjoy'd the Advantages of that Trade only by Permission.

But that the *French* King should Invade Our *Charibbee* Islands, and possess himself of Our Territories of the Province of *New-York* and of *Hudson's-Bay* in a Hostile manner, seizing Our Forts, burning Our Subjects Houses, and enriching his People with the Spoil of their Goods and Merchandizes, detaining some of Our Subjects under the Hardship of Imprisonment, causing others to be inhumanely kill'd, and driving the rest to Sea in a small Vessel, without Food and Necessaries to support them, are Actions not becoming even an Enemy; and yet he was so far from declaring himself so, that at that very time he was Negotiating here in *England* by his Ministers, a Treaty of Neutrality and good Correspondence in *America*.

The Proceedings of the *French* King against Our Subjects in *Europe* are so Notorious, that We shall not need to enlarge upon them; His countenancing the Seizure of *English* Ships by *French* Privateers, forbidding the Importation of great part of the Product and Manufactures of Our Kingdom, and imposing exorbitant Customs upon the rest, notwithstanding the vast Advantage he and the *French* Nation reap by their Commerce with *England*, are sufficient Evidences of his Designs to destroy the Trade, and consequently to ruine the Navigation, upon which the Wealth and Safety of this Nation very much depends.

The Right of the Flag, Inherent in the Crown of *England*, has been Disputed by his Orders in Violation of Our Sovereignty of the Narrow Seas, which in all Ages has been Asserted by Our Predecessors, and We are resolv'd to Maintain for the Honour of Our Crown, and of the *English* Nation.

But that which must nearly touch Us, is his unchristian Prosecution of many of Our *English* Protestant Subjects in *France*, for matters of Religion, contrary to the Law of Nations, and express Treaties, forcing them to abjure their Religion by strange and unusual Cruelties, and Imprisoning some of the Masters and Seamen of Our Merchant Ships, and Condemning others to the Gallies, upon pretence of having on Board, either some of his own miserable Protestant Subjects, or their Effects; And Lastly, as he has for some years last past, endeavoured by Insinuations and Promises of Assistance, to overthrow the Government of *England*; So now by open and violent Methods, and the actual Invasion of Our Kingdom of *Ireland*, in support of Our Subjects in Arms, and in Rebellion against Us, he is promoting the utter Extirpation of Our good and Loyal Subjects in that Our Kingdom.

Being therefore thus necessitated to take up Arms, and Relying on the help of Almighty God in Our just undertaking, We have thought fit to Declare, and do hereby Declare War against the *French* King, and that We will in Conjunction with Our Allies, Vigorously Prosecute the same by Sea and Land (since he hath so unrighteously begun it) being assured of the hearty Concurrence and Assistance of Our Subjects in support of so good a Cause; Hereby Willing and Requiring Our General of Our Forces, Our Commissioners for Executing the Office of High Admiral, Our Lieutenants of Our several Counties, Governours of Our Forts and Garisons, and all other Officers and Soldiers under them, by Sea and Land, to do, and execute all acts of Hostility in the Prosecution of this War against the *French* King, his Vassals and Subjects, and to oppose their Attempts, Willing and Requiring all Our Subjects to take Notice of the same, whom We henceforth strictly forbid to hold any Correspondence or Communication with the said *French* King, or his Subjects; And because there are remaining in Our Kingdoms many of the Subjects of the *French* King; We do Declare and give Our Royal Word, that all such of the *French* Nation as shall demean themselves dutifully towards Us, and not Correspond with Our Enemies, shall be safe in their Persons and Estates, and free from all molestation and trouble of any kind.

Given at Our Court at Hampton-Court the Seventh Day of May, 1689. In the First Year of Our Reign.

God Save King WILLIAM and Queen MARY.

L O N D O N,

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